

RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT



11-36 POLICE CYCLIST OPERATING MANUAL

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines governing the operation of bicycles by sworn officers of the Richmond Police Department.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Department to ensure the safe, effective operation of police bicycles.

OBJECTIVE

The Police Department utilizes police officers equipped with bicycles in order to patrol areas that are difficult to reach by motor or foot patrol, to provide a rapid response through traffic congestion, to provide a highly visible and approachable street presence, to allow rapid and quiet approach to crimes in progress, to present a positive image in support of community policing goals, and to enhance the provision of police customer service to the citizens of Richmond.

PROCEDURE

LAW OPERATION, CONDITIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF USAGE

Police cyclists will comply with all state laws and city ordinances except during emergency conditions or situations that are unique to law enforcement. Police cyclists will not operate their bicycles unless they are wearing an approved bicycle helmet. Police Department bicycles must be equipped with working headlights on the front of the bicycle and a red flashing LED light device will be attached to the rear of the bicycle in such a manner that it is plainly visible to traffic that is approaching the cyclist from the rear. Police cyclists will not operate their bicycles when their supervisors determine that weather conditions render such operation unsafe or ineffective.

AUTHORIZATION FOR USE IN VARIOUS SITUATIONS AND UNIFORMS

Police cyclists may utilize their bicycles in uniform as well as for plainclothes operations as deemed appropriate by their supervisors. Police cyclists may wear their bicycle uniforms when appearing in Richmond General District Courts. When Police cyclists appear in other courts, they will comply with standard policy for courtroom attire. Supervisors of police cyclists may allow reasonable variations from department policies concerning uniforms and equipment for situations that are unique to the bicycle patrol operations.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONDITION AND MAINTENANCE OF BICYCLES

Each police cyclist is responsible for checking his/her bicycle to ensure that it is in good working condition and that it is safe to ride. Each police cyclist is responsible for performing minor repairs to the officer's assigned bicycle within the scope of what the officer has been trained to do such as repairing flat tires, minor brake or derailleur adjustments, cleaning and lubrication. When a bicycle or other related equipment is in need of repair or maintenance that is beyond the capability of the officer, the officer will notify his/her supervisor who will make appropriate arrangements for the equipment repair.

RELATED EQUIPMENT

Police Department bicycles will be equipped with rear mounted kick-stands, rear racks, rack mounted bags, bar ends, water bottle cages, battery operated headlights, flashing LED taillights, pedal retention devices and a locking device that will be used to secure the bicycle when the cyclist must leave it unattended. No police bicycle will be left unattended without being secured by a locking device. Police cyclists will wear protective clothing at all times when operating Police Department bicycles including helmets, eye protection, and gloves. The gloves can be fingerless. Other essential equipment for the efficient operation of the bicycles is a tire pump or similar air delivery device, a spare tube and/or patch kit, tire levers and tools or a tool kit that includes Allen wrenches, screwdrivers and pliers or a similar gripping device. This equipment will be secured and stored at the Precincts in the bicycle storage rooms and/or sheds.

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION OF POLICE CYCLISTS

Training and certification of police cyclists is conducted in accordance with a curriculum that is administered by the International Police Mountain Bike Association (IPMBA). The instructors must be IPMBA certified Police Cyclist Instructors in good standing. No police officer will operate any Police Department bicycle, other than for training purposes and under the direct supervision of a Police Cyclist Instructor or his IPMBA certified designee, until he/she has successfully completed the Cyclist Certification Training.

The training is a forty-hour course that is approximately half classroom lecture and half practical exercises on bicycles. The classroom portion of the training includes bicycle specific traffic laws; fitness and nutrition; bicycle equipment, maintenance and repair; the Effective Cycling video; patrol techniques; nighttime conspicuity; and community policing on bicycles. The practical portion of the course encompasses bicycle fit and adjustment; on-the-road cycling skills; formation riding; hazard recognition and avoidance; obstacle clearing; tactical maneuvers and suspect chases; cone courses; and firearms training. Trainees must successfully complete rigorous written and practical examinations before they can be certified. All police cyclists who successfully complete the Cyclist Certification Training are issued certificates. The Police Cyclist Instructors maintain rosters of all participants in all classes that include the officers' names, agency, Social Security number and written test score. Additionally, all scoring and testing materials from the schools are kept on file by the Police Cyclist Instructors. Once the Cyclist Certification Training is complete, no re-certification exercises are required for police cyclists.